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Identical letters dated 23 March 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Over the past few days, armed terrorist groups led by the Nusrah Front, which has been placed on the Security Council list of terrorist organizations, have launched savage attacks against Damascus, the capital of the Syrian Arab Republic, from the nearby suburbs of Jawbar and Qabun. The armed terrorist groups attacked peaceful residential areas with car bombs, indiscriminately fired shells, rockets and explosive bullets, killing and wounding dozens of innocent Damascenes, including children, elderly persons and women. The armed terrorist groups also cut off key roads and bombarded peaceful Damascus neighbourhoods, and they did not hesitate to bombard a number of embassies, hospitals, schools and vital civil installations in Damascus and other Syrian cities and villages.

In addition, several terrorist organizations allied with the Nusrah Front carried out attacks in Hama governorate. Those organizations, which include Jaysh al-Izzah, Jaysh al-Nasr and the Levant Corps, are among those that had signed the cessation of hostilities agreement and participated in the Astana and Geneva meetings. According to available information, more than 60 per cent of the projectiles that have been striking Damascus and Dar'a city are being fired from areas controlled by the Army of Islam and the factions that participated in the Astana meetings.

The above confirms that the masters of those terrorist organization issued orders to open new battle fronts across the Syrian Arab Republic, in stark violation of the cessation of hostilities agreement that was concluded on 29 December 2016. The Syrian Arab Republic, on the other hand, has complied with that agreement, which was agreed upon at the Astana meetings, and supported by the Geneva meeting and welcomed by the Security Council. We are firmly convinced that the true purpose of these attacks is to influence the Geneva discussions, which began on 23 March, and undermine the Astana discussions.

Available information confirms that the intelligence agencies of Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar were involved in these incidents. Moreover, everyone is now aware that the latter two countries recently sent millions of dollars to the armed groups as an inducement to carry out these attacks. This evidenced by the absence of the armed opposition groups that are associated with the Turkish security agencies at the recent Astana discussion and by the fact that the official Saudi

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Arabian and Qatari media, speaking on behalf of their Governments, commended that absence.

Syria calls on the Security Council to fulfil its responsibility to counter terrorism and the criminal acts of terrorism that are being perpetrated by armed terrorist groups around the capital, Damascus, and throughout the Syrian Arab Republic.

In view of its genuine commitment to countering terrorism, Syria will continue to combat this scourge wherever it arises. Syria believes that it is imperative to arrive at a political solution to the crisis, and that is why it is now participating in the Geneva discussions, despite the ongoing efforts to hinder and scupper the discussions that are being made by the armed terrorist groups and their supporters and financers, who exalt these groups and provide them with an unlimited supply of arms with which to kill the Syrian people.

I should be grateful if this letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mounzer **Mounzer**
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'affaires a.i.